LAND TENURE IN JAZIRAH

427 The custom in Jazirah is for the tenant to pay the rent in a percentage of the crop delivered to the owner free of all expense.

I. Land Tenure for the Peasant

427 651 Under Ottoman rule and because land was abundant and peasants scarce, the rent was fixed at 7L. The owner and the tenant were each responsible for the Government taxes on his own share of the produce.

The Ottoman Government collected the tithe and the werko as taxes on the land. The title, as its name implies, was 10% of the produce to which was added later 2-1/2% as special revenue for public instruction.

Because the peasant wanted to be as far away from Government officials as possible he paid the landowner 19-1/2%, including the tithe and the rent, and did not care how much of that the landowner actually paid so long as he remained unmolested by the public officials. This percentage of 19-1/2% is still prevailing and is known by the name of "Hassil and Tabo".

In 1924 the French found the collection of the tithe cumbersome and adopted a modified system. They took the average tax paid by the land in the preceding four years and made the sum obligatory. In practice, this meant light taxation on the land, but the landowner still received from the peasant the same percentage as when the tithe was actually paid. Later, when the tax of 7% on agricultural produce took the place of all land taxes and the peasant had to pay it when he transported his crop for sale, he kept paying the landowner 19-1/2% so that his percentage has come to mean rent to the landowner without the obligation on his part to pay the taxes of the peasant. What made the situation acceptable to the peasant was that the increase in population would have raised the rent anyway. He now pays this rent for the use of land and house. If the house is not included for his, he constructs his own house of sun-baked bricks, but retains the right to remove the wooden roof when he leaves the village.

[342]

11: Hourani S-4 (no date) 1948 MD1 Syria MD1

the towns is scarcely above subsistence-level. In most parts of the country the huts of the peasants, made of wattle or mud-brick or in parts of stone, contain nothing but the barest necessities; and the greater part of the population live on a diet of bread, olive-oil, milk and perhaps fruit and vegetables in season. Famine is rare, and has not occurred on a large scale since the First World War; but malnutrition is very widespread. On account of this and of the absence of sanitation and the scarcity of doctors in the country districts, the standard of health is also low. Malaria, typhoid, trachoma and other diseases are endemic. The standard of living is highest in Beirut and the Christian parts of Lebanon, which have profited greatly from the savings and experience of the emigrants to the New World.

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The changes in the economic system are beginning to cause far-reaching changes in the whole social structure. In the larger towns the externals of life are almost wholly modernized. Clothes and foodstuffs, the construction and furnishing of houses and methods of transport all approximate to those in use in Europe. The old externals it is true still linger on; the camel and the motor-car jostle one another in the streets of Damascus. But it is generally recognized, and on the whole without regret, that it is only a matter of time until the old completely disappears. In the small towns and villages of the Christian portions of Lebanon, too, the process of Westernization in externals has gone far. In the smaller towns and countryside of the interior, the change is slower in coming; but motor-cars and roads have prepared the way for it.

The fundamental social forms, however, are slower in changing. The dominant social class is still that of the landowners, who continue to possess a semi-feudal status. No other social class is strong or self-conscious enough to stand against them. The cultivators have little effective power of moving from one estate or region to another; although intelligent, they are too unenlightened to have much effective sense of grievance or capacity for political or economic combination. Only in parts of Lebanon does there exist a considerable number of free and comparatively enlightened smallholders. As yet there is neither an industrial middle

361 consist of clustered tetrahedrons, coloured with blue and red.
346 The astragals of the columns and their tori are of gilt bronze.
172 All the surfaces are composed of alternating courses of different colours.

The same features are to be seen in the buildings put up by the governor, Dervish-Pasha, forming a fine group at the beginning of the Pilgrims' Way, to the west of the old town. The façade of the "Ed-Derwichiyeh" Mosque is composed of alternate black and white courses; the tall polygonal minaret is painted green. The whole building, which is surmounted by a large dome encircled by small cupolas, is architecturally connected with the neighbouring mausoleum by an archway over the road. The arrangement of designs, shapes and colours on the façades shows extraordinary imaginative ingenuity. The pointed bulbous dome of the mausoleum rests on a drum of irregular shape. At a later date, in the same street, but a little further south, Sinan-Pasha built his mosque among the suqs of Bab Jabiya; it has the same characteristics and features (minaret faced with green faience tiles, large dome, inflected arches, geometrical capitals, etc.); above all, it makes the same spectacular impression in the street surrounding, inevitably catching the eye between the suqs and the Mecca road.

361 Within the confines of the old town, between the Great
342 Mosque and the "Street called Straight", a number of khans
172 and two new hammams were built at this period.

Dervish-Pasha built the "Khan Al-Harir", which is a curious mixture of Syrian and Turkish architectural styles. It is a fine structure, with porticoes surrounding the courtyard and, on the upper floor, two series of rooms connected by a corridor and covered by a triple row of domes.

The Khan Al-Gumruk, in the same locality, has a covered hall instead of a central courtyard, and six large domes supported on pendentives. The Khan Suleyman-Pasha (1732), following a similar but more complicated plan, has a courtyard covered by two large domes. Here, the composition is conceived on broader lines and the architectural volumes are enormous, while the dual colour scheme is still found, not only in the black and white courses of the walls, but also in the bonding of the voussoirs of the arcades and pendentives. Some years later, Asad-Pasha, who was Vali (governor) of Damascus and led the great pilgrimage for 14 years running, built a new khan, and a house for himself between it and the Great Mosque.

The khan has a façade reminiscent of Venetian Renaissance architecture in composition, while the building technique and the choice of decorative motifs and materials are in the best artistic traditions of northern Syria. Asad-Pasha's residence ("Azem Palace", 1749) has the same features, repeated and multiplied; it follows the traditional plan of all large Syrian dwellings, with its two entirely separate groups of rooms (selamlik [men's quarters] and haremlik [women's quarters]), its courtyards, porticoes, iwans, pools and fountains.

Thus Damascus today, as in the earliest periods of its history, is still assimilating and using artistic and cultural themes, borne along the great traffic routes, to converge upon the oasis between the Anti-Lebanon and the desert.

PRESENTATION OF MONUMENTS

361 In studying the growth of Damascus and its various districts,
172 we have tried to bring out the character and functions of certain groups of buildings which, if skilfully restored and arranged,

P. 18 A

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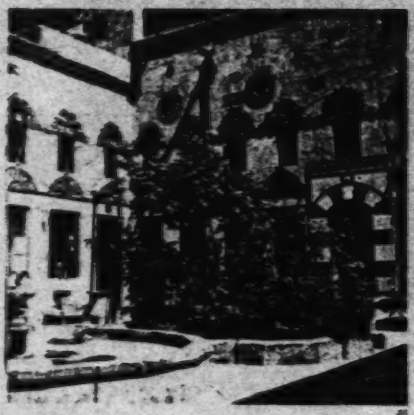

25 26

25. Aleppo. El-Omari Mosque.
26. Aleppo. Mariaun Andon.
27. Aleppo. Ambikhaeb; House.
28. Aleppo. Khan Enchahan.

following p 35-F

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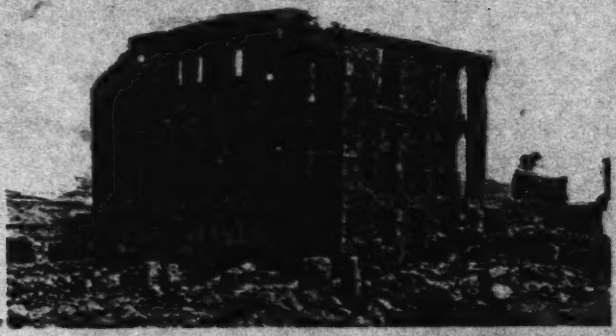

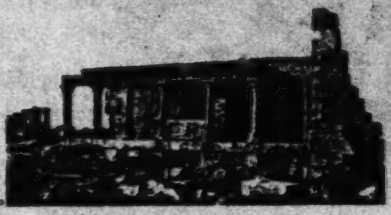

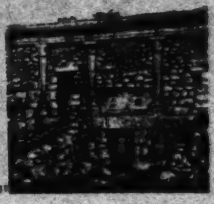

47. Deir Semaan. Hemsley.
48. St. Simeon Stylites. General viewpoint.
49. Qalblouz. Dimensions of the church.
50. Rehâbi. Portion of a house (1938).
51. Rehâbi. The same in 1953.

following 25 - M

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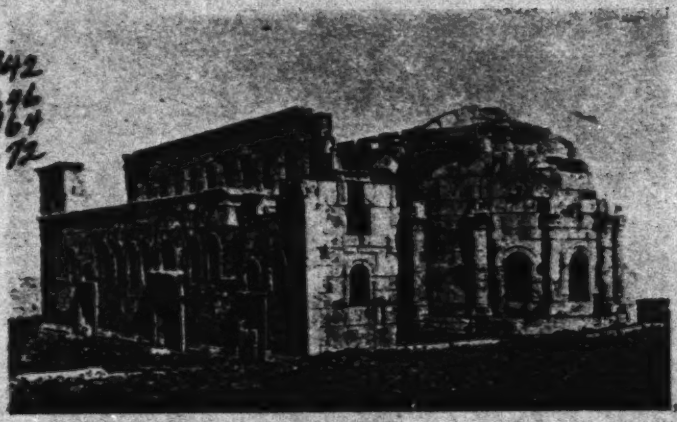

32. Qalb-Lauzeh. The church.
33. Baalbek. Acropolis.
34. El-Bass. Tomb.

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PRODUCTION

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عدد رخص البناء الممنوحة من قبل الدائرة الفنية في مدينة دمشق (سنوات ١٩٣٩ - ١٩٥٣)

NUMBER OF BUILDING PERMITS ISSUED BY THE TECHNICAL DEPARTMENT IN DAMASCUS, YEARS 1939 — 1953

Table No. 15

جدول رقم ١٥

Year and Month	الأبنية الجديدة للسكن New Residential Buildings			الأبنية الجديدة التجارية والصناعية New Commercial and Industrial Buildings		عدد الرخص للبيوت الحجرية Permits for simple and wooden construc-tions	السنة والشهور
	المساحة المبنية م٢ Floor Area M2	وحدات السكن Number of Residential units	عدد الرخص Number of Permits	المساحة المبنية م٢ Floor Area M2	عدد الرخص Number of Permits		
1939	50,876	287	190	—	—	537	١٩٣٩
1940	40,373	240	119	—	—	471	١٩٤٠
1941	24,300	140	74	—	—	384	١٩٤١
1942	20,703	127	65	—	—	288	١٩٤٢
1943	41,207	230	126	—	—	316	١٩٤٣
1944	79,492	540	254	—	—	346	١٩٤٤
1945	55,971	353	176	—	—	434	١٩٤٥
1946	90,356	680	326	—	—	627	١٩٤٦
1947	177,400	838	369	—	—	580	١٩٤٧
1948	164,849	865	434	—	—	515	١٩٤٨
1949	165,758	903	393	—	—	396	١٩٤٩
1950	174,674	863	407	33,916	92	333	١٩٥٠
1951	133,058	833	332	28,565	62	246	١٩٥١
1952	178,925	1,107	458	30,984	65	224	١٩٥٢
1953	231,733	1,239	463	33,032	63	188	١٩٥٣
1953							١٩٥٣
January	19,834	107	42	3,101	4	12	كانون ثاني
February	17,939	114	46	2,143	8	13	شباط
March	11,419	67	30	5,129	8	17	آذار
April	19,617	118	37	2,235	3	6	نيسان
May	25,085	142	45	5,111	9	17	أيار
June	17,335	93	33	925	3	21	حزيران
July	20,468	96	45	—	—	16	تموز
August	26,513	150	44	8,069	8	18	آب
September	23,512	132	40	619	3	21	أيلول
October	10,392	62	36	3,625	3	20	تشرين أول
November	15,747	86	30	687	6	10	تشرين ثاني
December	23,873	74	35	1,287	3	17	كانون أول

25: Warriner S-5 (no date) 1948 M1 Middle East
Syria MD1

Wheat yields are lower than the average for Syria, averaging 4 hundredweight to the acre.

Almost the whole of the estate is let to share-tenants who are supervised by an agent, the landowners themselves rarely visiting the estate. The share of the crop taken by the landlord is 25 per cent on non-irrigated land and 42½ per cent on irrigated land. These shares are more favourable to the tenant than is usual, because it is desired to attract more labour to the estate which sixty years ago was quite uncultivated. As elsewhere, the tenants have no leases but live in fear of eviction.

The tenants are divided into five classes:[1]

1. Large tenants cultivating 6 feddans (225 acres) of non-irrigated land: 4 in number.
2. Medium sized tenants cultivating 4½ feddans (168¾ acres): 4 in number.
3. Small tenants cultivating 3 feddans (112½ acres): 60 in number.
4. Small tenants cultivating irrigated land and with an average area of 18 acres: 100 in number.
5. Wage labourers, who form the majority of the villagers.

Of these classes, only the small groups of large and medium-sized tenants can live well, in the sense that the output of the farm suffices to cover the essential needs of the family and also provides a small cash surplus. The surplus is used to buy gold pounds and jewellery. But the other groups cannot achieve even a sufficient standard of food consumption. The standard consumption of wheat (barley in the case of the very poor peasants) is 14 kilogrammes of grain per month; to achieve this level it is necessary to crop about 45 acres. Thus with the present system of cultivation, the class of small tenants, who cultivate an area of 112 acres and would appear to have quite sufficient land, cannot attain the minimum because only one-third, 35 acres, can be cultivated owing to shortage of live-stock.

These small tenants, who are typical of the farmers in the great plains of Syria, are very poor, living in one- or two-roomed mud huts, and when there is only one room, sharing it with their animals.

[1] It must be said that the feddan in Syria is a variable measure and here is equivalent to 37½ acres.

widely used, chiefly in the form of *leban*, a fermented milk product, cheese or butter. About 60 to 70 per cent of the milk is derived from sheep; the remainder, from cattle or goats. The Juliana breed of cattle and a special breed of "Damascus goat" are raised in most regions and are noteworthy as milk producers. Fowl and eggs are usually plentiful, but the consumption of meat is normally low, especially in the rural areas. Mutton is the principal meat, although the flesh of cattle, goats and camels is also utilized. Fish are valuable as a source of protein in the Euphrates and the Khabour river basins and along the coast; they are seldom available in other regions.

The Bedouin live chiefly on milk products made from the milk of their flocks, augmented by cereals and, occasionally, dates. Meat is often more of a luxury among the nomads than among the villagers. The average Bedouin diet is usually sparse and monotonous.

Housing

Life in rural Syria centers in the villages, which are self-contained social units. Structurally, they are compact, with the houses attached, and built in such a manner that a continuous windowless wall faces the street. Mud brick or adobe is the predominating building material, although stone is sometimes employed in the highland areas. The houses may consist of one or several rooms, which almost invariably open into a central compound. Separate shelters for storage and for the livestock may line the sides of the courtyards, but in the poorer villages the domestic animals are frequently housed with the family, at least during the winter months. The roofs are typically flat, made of rolled earth overlaid on poles and reeds or of thatch. Beehive-type houses with domed or conical roofs, however, are a characteristic feature of the treeless plains in Latakia, Aleppo and Al Jazira provinces. Dwellings built partially underground, often simulating caves, are encountered in some mountain villages in Latakia. Considerable

variation exists between the living conditions of the more prosperous farmers and of the peasants, many of the latter possessing little beyond the barest necessities.

The larger cities, as Damascus and Aleppo, have been important junctions on trade routes from India to the Mediterranean for centuries, and reflect the influence of both Eastern and Western civilizations. They are a combination of the old Arab-type city and the modern, with most of the amenities of urban life. The older sections are usually made up of several quarters, dominated by different racial or religious groups. The houses are constructed of stone, brick or reinforced concrete and stucco, with flat or tiled roofs. In Damascus, about one third of the inhabitants live within the limits of the ancient city and a third in the modern residential developments.

The Bedouin follow essentially the same pattern of life in Syria as in other countries of the Near and Middle East. The nomadic tribes dwell in tents made of goats' hair, usually in close association with their livestock. Their standards of living are primitive, both in the tent encampments and the semipastoral settlements.

ENVIRONMENT AND SANITATION

Water Supplies

Water supplies are deficient in many sections of the country, and acute shortages may be experienced during the dry season. In the rural areas, domestic supplies are obtained from deep or shallow wells, springs or rivers, and sometimes from rain-water cisterns. *Korazes*, or wells connected by underground conduits which often extend for several miles, and waterholes, dug in the plains or near watercourses, are used in some districts. The village supplies are frequently polluted and responsible for the spread of intestinal infections.

The water supply of Damascus is taken from an underground reservoir at 'Ain el Fije, which is fed by springs in the Anti-